

OLD STATE HOUSE
SPRINGFIELD ILLINOIS
SANGAMON CO.

HABS. NO. ILL. 224

HABS

ILL,

84-SPRIF,

1-

Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
DISTRICT NO. ILL. 2

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
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CORN BELT BANK BUILDING - BLOOMINGTON ILL.

HABS
ILL,
84-SPRIE,
1-

"OLD STATE HOUSE"
(Sangamon County Court House)
Springfield, Sangamon County, Illinois

Owner. Sangamon County.

Date Of Erection. 1837-1853.

Architect. John F. Rague.

Builder. Day labor with the following contractors: William Harrower--Stone; James C. Sutton--Timber Work; William Helmle--Carver; Dallman and Graham--Staircase; Roll, Smith, and Leggott--Plastering.

Present Condition. In general, the building is well preserved, although the original stone is fast deteriorating. In 1899, the building was raised and a ground floor inserted, the upper floors remaining essentially the same, except the Hall of Representatives, which was changed to accommodate the circuit court room.

Number Of Stories. Three.

Materials Of Construction. The foundations, in most cases, are of brick masonry with brick, stone, and concrete footings. Some piers are of stone. It is thought that the original footings were of stone. The exterior walls are faced with stone and backed up with brick. The main bearing partition walls are of brick. When the building was raised and remodeled, the entire inside, with the exception of brick walls, was torn out and new floors, roof and partitions put in. The new floor and roof construc-

tion are of steel beams with a concrete floor and roof slab. Steel beams are carried on cast-iron columns in some cases (where they come in partitions) fireproofed with hollow tile. The new partitions are of hollow tile. The new dome is of steel construction with steel columns and metal sides and roof.

Other Existing Records. Drawings of ground floor addition in office of Bullard and Bullard, Springfield. Photographs at Herbert George Studio, Springfield. State and county histories in Illinois State Historical Library.

Additional Data. "By an Act supplemental to the Act permanently locating the seat of government of Illinois at Springfield, approved March 3, 1837, the county commissioners were empowered to convey to the governor of the state the property known as the "Public Square" in the city of Springfield, containing two and one-half acres. Due to a supposed defect in this deed, it was again deeded to the state on February 10, 1847." An Act legalizing both deeds was passed February 17, 1847.

One of the conditions of locating the capitol in Springfield was that the city should pay \$50,000.00 toward the erection of the building, which the city did.

The commissioners appointed Archibald Job, of Morgan County, and A. G. Henry and Thomas Haughan, of Sangamon County, as commissioners to supervise the construction of the State House.

Architects were called to submit plans for the building, and the plans drawn by John F. Rague of Springfield were accepted, for which he received \$300.00.

Work was started on the building in 1837 on a day labor basis and was completed in 1853. "William Harrower was the stone contractor; James C. Sutton had the contract for the timber work and William Helmle, father of the late George H. Helmle, F.A.I.A., for many years a leading architect of the state, carved the capitals for the columns in the House of Representatives. The staircase in the rotunda was constructed by Dallman and Graham, and John E. Roll, associated with Isaac Smith and George Leggott, were the plastering contractors."

The stone for the building was quarried at Leroy L. Hill's place on Sugar Creek, about six miles south of Springfield. Hill signed a contract to let the state use as much stone as they wanted at \$1.00 a load at the quarry, from which it was hauled to the building site by teams of oxen. This project, by the time it was completed, exhausted the stone at the quarry.

During the period of construction, the city found it impossible to raise the final third of the \$50,000.00 guarantee, so one hundred citizens signed a note for this amount. Among the names on this note were those of Abraham Lincoln and E. D. Baker.

The corner stone was laid July 4, 1837, just five months after Springfield was selected as the capital.

E. D. Baker was the main speaker of the dedication of the building, which was a great event.

The estimated cost of the building was \$120,000.00, but when it was completed, \$240,000.00 was expended on it.

The architecture is of the Greek Doric order. The building is 123 feet long and 90 feet wide, with porticos on the north and south sides projecting 11½ feet. It is 154 feet to the top of the flag staff.

The original building had two stories and a basement. The basement was used for storage room. The northwest corner of the first floor was the office of the Secretary of State, next to this south was the State Library, and the southwest corner was the office of the State Auditor. The Treasurer's office was in the southeast corner, next north was the Supreme Court Room, and the clerk of that court had his desk therein. The northeast room contained the law library.

The west side of the second floor was entirely taken up with the Hall of Representatives, a very fine room with a gallery on the east side, which has since been removed. This is now the circuit court room. The north part of the east side of the second floor was the Senate chamber, southeast part was the governor's private office, and the north and south sides were small rooms for various purposes.

The main entrances were on the north and south sides and opened into what was called the "rotunda", from which

in the center rose two flights of stairs, meeting half way up and again dividing, and so reaching the second floor.

In the Hall of Representatives, Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas debated questions of state, and the former delivered, on the occasion of his nomination to the United States Senate in June, 1858, his memorable speech in which he said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave, half free."

In the Governor's room, Mr. Lincoln received his visitors after his nomination, and before his departure to Washington in 1861; and in its anteroom, U. S. Grant waited many an hour for his appointment in the volunteer army. In 1865, Mr. Lincoln's remains lay in state in this same Hall of Representatives where he so often addressed his fellow citizens on matters of public concern. John A. Logan spoke here when a young man, first coming into state-wide notice.

On October 23, 1869, the capitol building and square were deeded to the county in consideration of \$200,000.00 and the site of the present State House.

In January, 1876, when the state moved its offices to the present State Capitol and vacated the square, the county moved into the present building.

This building was not fireproof and the county needed more space, so on June 11, 1897, Dr. A. L. Converse in-

troduced a resolution to the Board of Supervisors--setting forth the need of additional room and the danger of fire, and providing for the appointment of a committee to investigate this matter, which was referred to a committee. This committee held a special meeting October 4, 1898 and reported that they had fully examined the building, found it inadequate, dangerous and unsafe; that they believed it inexpedient and undesirable to sell off any of the ground, but advised steps be taken at once to remodel, enlarge, and fireproof the old building.

On the acceptance of this report, the Board decided to submit the question of levying a tax of \$100,000.00 to remodel the Court House, which was voted.

A committee on "Remodeling the Court House" was selected, consisting of: E. L. Stockdale, J. H. Maxcy, J. H. Crowder, Thomas C. Mather, and H. H. Biggs.

At the next meeting, a plan by S. J. Hanes, architect, was adopted, but a proposition for raising the building was defeated. Hanes and S. A. Bullard were jointly employed to superintend the job. The contract was let March 29, 1899, to Warren-Roberts and Company, of Chicago, for \$49,850.00.

After the contract had been let and the old building dismantled, the committee found they still would not have the necessary room, so they let an additional contract to Warren Roberts and Company to raise the

building 11 feet for the additional sum of \$27,500.00. The building was raised on jacks in twelve days and was considered the engineering feat of all time.

Then, it was decided to replace the old roof and dome for an additional sum of \$12,000.00, making a metal dome and tile roof.

The total cost of remodeling and raising the building, together with money spent for temporary quarters, was \$175,000.00.

The new corner stone was laid October 21, 1899.

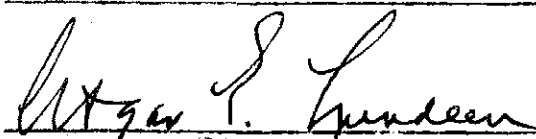
References:

Connelly--Sangamon County Court House--1899.

Giger--Story of the Sangamon County Court House--1901.

Bateman and Selby--Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Sangamon County--Vol. 2, Part 1.

(Approved)


District Officer

Rev. Sept. 25 '36 T.W.